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### **Understanding disorders of mood exploring the differences between disorders of thought and mood**



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Disorders of mood generally effect particular aspects of an individual's mood. The person experiencing a disorder of thought, such as schizophrenia, becomes more isolated and has problems to communicating with the outside world. They are unable to discern reality from fantasy. People with mood disorders have better relationship skills. People with disorders of thought have very poor interpersonal skills and have an extremely poor support system. We will discuss the bipolar spectrum. People experiencing these disorders frequently have comorbid diseases. Other problems such as PTSD, addictions, ADHD, chronic medical illnesses, TBI, etc, lead to a more complex and integrated treatment approach. Other issues, such as denial of disease and medication non-compliance lead to frequent relapses of not just the bipolar, but all their comorbid diseases. Bipolar I disorder is perhaps the best known and frequently discussed. PT's in the acute state usually require in-PT stays. Bipolar II disorder is much less known and often misdiagnosed for many years. Some of these PT's also require in-PT stays. Mixed episodes: these are the least understood of the mood disorders. They are frequently misdiagnosed or missed altogether. Genetics and family history will be discussed in relationship to the disease along with research that has been completed demonstrating brain inflammation and decrease in brain volume with psychotic episodes. Current research also demonstrates that the brain also has some ability to heal itself. Other applicable research findings will be presented. Current treatment modalities and medications to treat the complex issues these patients suffer will also be discussed. Short and long term treatment strategies will be addressed. Life path for recovering patients will be discussed if time allowed. Patients are never cured of these diseases; they can become much better at managing their symptoms and be proactive in their treatment.

#### **Biography**

Sharon Stecher is a Board Certified Advanced Practice Nurse since 1989. Her work spans a variety of settings with numerous populations. She also taught Nursing for 15 yrs. Her work experience covers hospital, outpatient, office and clinical settings. She diagnoses and treats patients over 16 years of age covering the spectrum of Psychiatric Disorders. She works in collaboration with a doctor in a very busy Psychiatric practice, although much of her work is solo with a doctor for collaboration and post review of records. She is a Member of the ANA, MONA, and Sigma Theta Tau. She holds BSN and MSN(R) degrees from St. Louis University.

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